

REMARKS

The Office Action dated May 19, 2006, has been received and carefully noted. The above amendments to the claims, and the following remarks, are submitted as a full and complete response thereto.

Claims 1-47 are currently pending in the application, of which claims 1, 18-20, 35, and 46-47 are independent claims. Claims 1-45 have been amended, and claims 46-47 have been added, to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention. No new matter has been added, and no issues are raised that would require further consideration and/or search. Accordingly, entry of the amendments is respectfully requested because the amendment places the claims in condition for allowance or alternatively, because it places the claims in better condition for appeal. Claims 1-47 are respectfully submitted for consideration.

Claims 1-42 and 45 were again rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,775,534 of Lindgren et al. ("Lindgren"). Applicants respectfully submit that the claims recite subject matter that is neither disclosed nor suggested in Lindgren.

Claim 1, upon which claims 2-17 depend, is directed to a method including supporting emergency calls in a mobile communications network. The method also includes receiving a network access from a user equipment. The method further includes receiving network access information relating to said user equipment, said network access information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access. The

method additionally includes selectively controlling access to the network in dependence on said network access information. The method also includes disabling the selectively controlling access to the network for an emergency call network access.

Claim 18 is directed to a computer program product embodied on a computer readable medium including computer program code. The computer program code is configured to perform a method. The method includes receiving a network access from a user equipment. The method also includes receiving network access information relating to said user equipment, said network access information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access. The method further includes selectively controlling access to the network in dependence on said network access information. The method additionally includes disabling the selectively controlling access to the network for an emergency call network access.

Claim 19 is directed to a computer program product including a computer useable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for supporting emergency calls in a mobile communications network. The computer program product is configured when executed on a computer to perform receiving a network access from a user equipment, said network access information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access. The computer program product is also configured when executed on a computer to perform receiving network access information relating to said user equipment. The computer program product is further configured when executed on a computer to perform selectively controlling access to the network according to said

network access information. The computer program product is additionally configured when executed on a computer to perform disabling the selectively controlling access to the network for an emergency call network access.

Claim 20, upon which claims 21-34 depend, is directed to a network element including a network access request receiving unit configured to receive a network access request from a user equipment in a network. The network element also includes a network access information receiving unit configured to receive network access information relating to said user equipment, said network access information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access. The network element further includes a selection unit configured to selectively control network access for the user equipment in dependence on said network access information. The network element additionally includes a disabling unit configured to disable the selection unit for an emergency call network access.

Claim 35, upon which claims 36-45 depend, is directed to a communication system including an access network, a core network, and at least one user equipment configured to connect to the core network through the access network. The access network is configured to receive a request for a network access from the user equipment. The access network is also configured to receive network access information relating to the user from the core network, said network access information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access. The access network is further configured to

selectively control access to the core network for the user equipment in dependence on said network access information. The access network is additionally configured to identify a request for an emergency call. The access network is also configured to disable the selective controlling of access to the network responsive to identification of the emergency call.

Certain embodiments of the present invention can advantageously permit users access to a core network in the case of an emergency by disabling selective access control. In particular, users that would normally not be authorized to access the network can be permitted to access the network if it is an emergency.

Applicants respectfully submit that Lindgren does not disclose or suggest all of the elements of any of the presently pending claims, and therefore cannot provide the critical and unobvious advantages described above.

Lindgren generally relates to allowing a mobile station to make a voice over IP (VoIP) call at a **time** when other calls would not be permitted. In particular, Lindgren describes two embodiments. In the first embodiment, as described in Figure 1 and columns 2 and 3 of Lindgren, the phone initiates a call with “activation messages each including an indication that this is an emergency call.” (column 1, lines 54-56) Later the “SGSN recognises the received emergency call indication and the SGSN will then not stop the call setup process.” (column 1, lines 61-65)

The second embodiment, described in Figure 4 and columns 4-6 of Lindgren, involves a mobile station with no Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) card. (column 4,

lines 19-22) It is evident that in this second embodiment there can be no subscriber information to associate and interrogate before the call is accepted. This second embodiment goes further to describe limiting the access to emergency calls only for this no-SIM device.

In neither embodiment of Lindgren is there disclosure or suggestion of retrieving and disabling the use of the Network Access Information. In the description of the second embodiment there is even specific reference made to the SGSN not needing “to contact the Home Location Register (HLR) of the mobile station subscriber.” (column 4, lines 48-49)

In both Figure 1 and Figure 4 there are arrows indicating the PDP context requests, responses, and the like. There is, however, no indication that Network Access Information is ever retrieved or even requested.

Consequently the system of Lindgren is susceptible to the emergency call being blocked if the Network Access Information is subsequently received by the controller. This could occur if the mobile station initiated another connection during the emergency call, or the mobile station moved to a new controller.

The Office Action responded to this weakness of Lindgren by inviting amendment to the claims. Applicants respectfully submit that the presently pending claims recite subject matter that is neither disclosed nor suggested by Lindgren, and accordingly further amendments to the claims are not needed.

In particular, Lindgren discusses a method of allowing a mobile station to make an emergency call even though other calls would not be allowed at the time. Lindgren describes situations in which a call request would not be allowed, these are when “the user may have not paid a bill, or the mobile system may have no information at all about the user, or there may be congestion on the network, or the mobile phone may be reported stolen” (column 1 lines 16 to 21).

Furthermore, Lindgren discusses a system in which a mobile station initiates an emergency call. The mobile station activates a session indicating that the call is an emergency call, and the SGSN element recognizes the emergency call indication and allows the call to progress “even if it would normally fail.”

There is no disclosure in Lindgren of the controlling network element (the SGSN) receiving any information “indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access.” Where Lindgren discloses in Figures 1 and 4 the method of setting up the emergency call, it is evident that none of the arrows or other features of the figures show or in any way suggest the SGSN receiving such information. Furthermore, referring to column 1, lines 16 to 21 of Lindgren as quoted above, it is apparent that Lindgren **does not even consider** blocking a call on account of the area in which the user equipment is located.

More particularly, the “information from the mobile device, e.g. ESN, Phone Number etc...” to which the Office Action refers at page 3, is not “information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access.”

Such a system as proposed by Lindgren has problems recognized by the present application but not Lindgren, insofar as the mobile station making an emergency call will have no “information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access” associated with either it or the call. Accordingly should the information be subsequently received by the controlling network element, the system could determine the mobile station is not allowed to make calls in that area and subsequently drop the emergency call.

Independent claims 1, 18-20, and 35 each recite “network access information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access.” Applicants respectfully submit that this feature is neither disclosed nor suggested by Lindgren.

As explained above, Lindgren does not discuss receiving such network access information and does not perform any subsequent steps based on such network access information. Accordingly, Lindgren also does not disclose or suggest the additional features of “selectively controlling access to the network in dependence on **said network access information**” (claims 1, 18, and 20), “selectively controlling access to the network according to **said network access information**” (claim 19), “selectively controlling access to the core network for the user equipment in dependence on **said network access information**” (claim 35).

It is respectfully submitted that Lindgren fails to disclose or suggest all of the elements of claims 1, 18-20, and 35. Claims 2-17, 21-34, 36-42, and 45 depend from claims 1, 20, and 35 respectively, and recite additional limitations. It is respectfully

submitted that each of claims 2-17, 21-34, 36-42, and 45 recites subject matter that is neither disclosed nor suggested in Lindgren. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 1-42 and 45 be withdrawn.

Claims 43-44 were again rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lindgren in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,594,492 of Choi et al. ("Choi"). Applicants respectfully submit that the claims recite subject matter that is neither disclosed nor suggested in the combination of Lindgren and Choi.

Claims 43-44 depend from claim 35. The deficiencies of Lindgren with regard to claim 35 are discussed above. Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Lindgren and Choi has at least the same deficiencies, because Choi does not remedy the above-described deficiencies of Lindgren.

Choi generally relates to anchor MSC information retrieval from a serving MSC following a completed inter-exchange handoff. As can be seen at column 5, lines 48-52, Choi is only concerned with operations surrounding inter-exchange handoffs. In particular, as can be seen at column 6, lines 42-52, Choi addresses – in one embodiment – a handoff in the context of an emergency services call. However, as Choi explains, what is of interest is "an information request message" within that context. Choi is not concerned with network access. As Choi goes on to explain at column 4, line 53 to column 5, line 31, the "information request message" may be a request for location information of the mobile station 506. Thus, Choi does not disclose or suggest anything

having to do with network access information or requests in the context of an emergency services call.

Accordingly, Choi is understandably silent as to “receiving network access information relating to said user equipment,” “network access information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access,” and “selectively controlling access to the core network for the user equipment in dependence on said network access information” as recited by claim 35 and therefore by claims 43-44 by virtue of their dependency on claim 35. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Choi fails to remedy the above-described deficiencies of Lindgren.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the combination of Lindgren and Choi fails to disclose or suggest all of the elements of claims 43-44, and it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 43-44 be withdrawn.

For the reasons explained above, it is respectfully submitted that each of claims 1-47 recites subject matter that is neither disclosed nor suggested in the cited references. It is therefore respectfully requested that all of claims 1-47 be allowed, and that this application be passed to issue.

If for any reason the Examiner determines that the application is not now in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact, by telephone, the applicants' undersigned attorney at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this application.

In the event this paper is not being timely filed, the applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension together with any additional fees may be charged to Counsel's Deposit Account 50-2222.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Flanagan", written over a horizontal line.

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